

that bill, pass it, and send it to me for my signature. Protecting America is our most solemn obligation, and I urge the House to pass this bill without delay.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1927.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation

August 4, 2007

Tonight the House joined the Senate in passing legislation that will close a critical gap in our intelligence collection, and I appreciate their efforts to complete the legislation before the August recess. The Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has assured me that this bill gives him what he needs to continue to protect the country, and therefore, I will sign this legislation as soon as it gets to my desk.

I also want to remind Congress that our work on reforming the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is not complete. When Congress returns in September, we need to work together on additional reforms, including the important issue of providing meaningful liability protection to those who are alleged to have assisted our Nation following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1927.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation

August 5, 2007

When our intelligence professionals have the legal tools to gather information about the intentions of our enemies, America is safer. And when these same legal tools also protect the civil liberties of Americans, then we can have the confidence to know that we can preserve our freedoms while making America safer.

The Protect America Act, passed with bipartisan support in the House and Senate, achieves both of these goals by modernizing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Over the past three decades, this law has not kept pace with revolutionary changes in tech-

nology. As a result, our intelligence professionals have told us that they are missing significant intelligence information that they need to protect the country.

S. 1927 reforms FISA by accounting for changes in technology and restoring the statute to its original focus on appropriate protections for the rights of persons in the United States and not foreign targets located in foreign lands.

Today, we face a dynamic threat from enemies who understand how to use modern technology against us. Whether foreign terrorists, hostile nations, or other actors, they change their tactics frequently and seek to exploit the very openness and freedoms we hold dear. Our tools to deter them must also be dynamic and flexible enough to meet the challenges they pose. This law gives our intelligence professionals this greater flexibility while closing a dangerous gap in our intelligence gathering activities that threatened to weaken our defenses.

We know that information we have been able to acquire about foreign threats will help us detect and prevent attacks on our homeland. Mike McConnell, the Director of National Intelligence, has assured me that this bill gives him the most immediate tools he needs to defeat the intentions of our enemies. And so in signing this legislation today, I am heartened to know that his critical work will be strengthened, and we will be better armed to prevent attacks in the future.

I commend Members of Congress who supported these important reforms and also for acting before adjourning for recess. In particular, I want to thank Mitch McConnell and John Boehner for their strong leadership on this issue and Senators Kit Bond and Dianne Feinstein for coming together in the Senate on an effective bipartisan solution. In the House of Representatives, Pete Hoekstra and Heather Wilson were instrumental in securing enactment of this vital piece of legislation before the August recess, and I thank them for their leadership.

While I appreciate the leadership it took to pass this bill, we must remember that our work is not done. This bill is a temporary, narrowly focused statute to deal with the most immediate shortcomings in the law.

When Congress returns in September, the intelligence committees and leaders in both parties will need to complete work on the comprehensive reforms requested by Director McConnell, including the important issue of providing meaningful liability protection to those who are alleged to have assisted our Nation following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

**The President's News Conference
With President Hamid Karzai of
Afghanistan at Camp David,
Maryland**

August 6, 2007

President Bush. Good morning. Thank you; be seated. Welcome.

I appreciate a man I've come to admire, President Karzai, for joining us. Laura and I had the honor of hosting the President for dinner last night. He and I spent a lot of this morning just sitting down alone talking about our common interests, common concerns. President Karzai is an optimistic man. He's watched his country emerge from days of darkness to days of hope.

President Karzai. Absolutely.

President Bush. I appreciate your stewardship. I appreciate your commitment to empowering your people. I appreciate your strong stance for freedom and justice, and I'm proud to call you an ally in this war against those who would wreak havoc in order to deny people a chance to live in peace.

We're working closely together to help the people of Afghanistan prosper. We work together to give the people of Afghanistan a chance to raise their children in a hopeful world, and we're working together to defeat those who would try to stop the advance of a free Afghan society.

We spent a fair amount of time talking about our security strategy. You might remember, it was last winter that people were speculating about the Taliban spring offensive and about how the Taliban had regrouped and were going to go on the attack

inside Afghanistan. There was a spring offensive, all right—it was conducted by U.S., NATO, and equally importantly, Afghan troops. And we went on the offense because we understand that it is in our mutual interests to deny extremists the opportunity to derail this young democracy.

There is still a fight going on, but I'm proud to report to the American people that the Afghan Army is in the fight. The Government is in the fight, and the Army is in the fight. Afghan national security forces are increasing in strength; there's about 110,000 Afghans now defending their nation. And more Afghans are stepping up to serve, and it's in the interest of the United States to help you develop that national army and local police that will send a clear message to the people of Afghanistan that the governments can help provide an opportunity for people to raise their children in a peaceful world.

There are a lot of forces there in Afghanistan supporting this Government, and our 23,500 troops are proud to stand side by side with 26,000 troops from other nations. And we applaud those countries who have committed their troops to help Afghanistan succeed. We've committed more than \$23 billion since 2001 to help rebuild the country. I think our citizens will be interested to know, for example, that 7,000 community health care workers have been trained that provide about 340,000 Afghan men, women, and children a month with good health care.

I remember talking a lot about how the Taliban prevented young girls from going to school in Afghanistan. American citizens recoil with horror to think about a government that would deny a young child the opportunity to have the basics necessary to succeed in life. Today, there are nearly 5 million students going to school in Afghanistan, a third of whom are girls. Still work to be done, don't get me wrong, but progress is being made, Mr. President, and we're proud of you, proud of the work you're doing.

We talked about the need to stem the narcotics trade. I'm sure the President will comment on this. He understands that it's very important for farmers to be incented to grow crop other than poppy, and that he knows